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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

In-depth evaluation of programme 45, Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development

Progress report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), at its thirty-third session, decided to schedule an in-depth evaluation of programme 45 of the medium-term plan, Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development, for consideration in 1996.

The present report reviews the development of programme 45 and its structure, resources and activities during the period 1992-1993. Recommendations are made (a) on resource mobilization, coordination of public information activities, need for greater publicity and resources; and (b) in relation with the work of the Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development and with the implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development.

The report concludes with methodological recommendations for a follow-up study of the United Nations system-wide response to the African critical economic situation, including recovery and development.

* E/AC.51/1994/1.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Methodology

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), at its thirty-third session, recommended that an in-depth evaluation of programme 45 of the medium-term plan, Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development, 1/ be prepared for its consideration in 1996. 2/

2. The present progress report provides, as CPC recommended at its twenty-seventh session, "such preliminary findings as can be derived from information already available". 3/ It also proposes for consideration by CPC a number of recommendations in areas where preliminary findings supported conclusions, together with methodological recommendations for a follow-up study.

3. Programme 45, Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development, is relatively new; it was established for the first time with the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 following the recommendation of CPC at its thirtieth session in 1990. This programme is essentially of a coordinating and catalytic nature, since the specific activities to be carried out by the United Nations identified in the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and subsequent related intergovernmental decisions are reflected in a number of programmes of the medium-term plan. The origin of programme 45 goes back to efforts undertaken in the early 1980s to deal with the critical economic situation in Africa through cooperation among the United Nations agencies concerned in making joint assessments of the situation, bringing them to the attention of the international community and mobilizing resources for assisting African countries. For instance, the periodical Africa Recovery, which is "the centerpiece of the Department of Public Information outreach" 4/ for global awareness of the critical economic situation in Africa under subprogramme 3 of programme 45, was first published in February 1987, succeeding another periodical.

4. In sections II to V, the present report summarizes the process through which the essential features of programme 45 were given shape and the main aspects of its implementation to date.

B. Coordinating and monitoring mechanisms before the establishment of programme 45

1. United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990

5. In 1985 the General Assembly decided to convene in New York, in 1986, a special session of the General Assembly at the ministerial level to consider in depth the critical economic situation in Africa (resolution 40/40). This was the first time a regional problem had been addressed in this manner. In June 1986, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990. In resolution S-13/2, the General Assembly requested the organs, organizations and bodies of the

United Nations system to participate fully in and support the implementation of the Programme of Action; it further requested the Secretary-General to monitor the process of implementation of the Programme of Action. A United Nations steering committee for the Programme of Action was established in September 1986. It was composed of the executive heads of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, the Department of Public Information and the Office for Special Political Questions, with other entities of the system participating; it met periodically under the chairmanship of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation, the Executive Secretary of ECA serving as Vice-Chairman. The Secretary of the Committee was responsible for providing a focal point at Headquarters for activities relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action. In addition, an inter-agency task force, to act as the operational arm of the Steering Committee, had been established under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary of ECA; ECA had responsibility for United Nations activities at the regional and subregional levels. 5/

2. Final review and appraisal of the Programme of Action

6. In 1990, after a mid-term review that took place in 1988, the General Assembly decided in resolution 45/178 to establish an ad hoc committee of the whole for preparing, for submission at the forty-sixth session, the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action. The final review contained a number of points of relevance (see resolution 46/151, annex, sect. I, paras. 2, 6, and 11):

> "The Programme of Action was silent regarding who was to act if unforeseen exogenous contingencies threw the Programme of Action off course; also, its review machinery did not clearly address this issue.
>
> ...
>
> "The reworking of United Nations system programmes in Africa around the goals of the Programme of Action was real and sustained but, by itself, was by no means large enough to place those goals at the centre of policy dialogue or resource mobilization.
>
> ...
>
> "Another reason for this record of non-success may have been inadequate United Nations and government debate or dialogue on the experience gained in the implementation of the Programme of Action."

7. The African Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning presented to the Ad Hoc Committee of the whole, mentioned in paragraph 6 above, their collective assessment of the implementation of the Programme of Action and a definition of the measures that were needed in the years to come. 6/ The Ministers recognized that the response of the United Nations system to the implementation of the Programme had, on the whole, been positive (para. 50);

however, they were of the view that the Programme had had very little positive impact on the performance of the African economy (para. 53). The Ministers concluded that, in the light of the experience of the Programme of Action, Africa did not need another programme of action: "Africa is already committed as a member of the international community to the new International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, and there are more than enough regional programmes in existence" (paras. 67 and 68).

8. At the North-South Round-table Consultation 7/ held in Ottawa in June 1991 on the Challenge of Africa in the 1990s - a contribution to the final review of the Programme of Action - it was argued that, whatever was agreed within the United Nations, the major trading Powers, for example, would be unwilling to make substantive commitments on trade issues outside the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), or the creditors on debt issues outside the Paris and London Clubs. An agreement negotiated at the United Nations might therefore best serve as a political catalyst, designed to stimulate and influence other endeavours on Africa already under way. Whatever the scope and nature of the new compact agreed upon, it should be more closely monitored, with a higher level of government involvement in its implementation than was the case with the Programme of Action.

3. Assessments of the coordinating and monitoring mechanisms

9. Several evaluations conducted between May 1990 and November 1992 contain assessments of the coordinating and monitoring mechanisms of the Programme of Action; one evaluation study was completed for the United Nations, and three studies for UNDP. A number of the findings and recommendations of the evaluations are of relevance to any programme succeeding the Programme of Action:

(a) On the central secretariat of the Steering Committee:

(i) The project needs internationally known and respected figures to focus and direct attention on the African economic crisis;

(ii) The successor unit should be recast with achievable objectives and a work-plan that is attainable; the staff complement should reflect the expectations of the project;

(iii) The successor project should concentrate on advocating and promoting the objectives of the New Agenda. Links between the project at the regional and global levels must be established and strengthened;

(b) On monitoring at the regional level:

(i) Monitoring policy developments, economic trends and Programme of Action implementation in 51 countries was a task that, even with informal support from ECA divisions, individual agencies of the United Nations system and also inter-agency task forces, required a more complex structure and a greater number of personnel than available (2 Professionals and 2 General Service);

(ii) The first order of business for the project successor should be the sensitization of all end-users to the fact that a new programme does indeed exist;

(iii) The monitoring under the Programme of Action was too much an in-house operation; any future arrangement should associate African leaders and representatives of donors more closely with the follow-up. It would also be desirable to associate representatives of the private sector and decentralized institutions.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMME 45 OF THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN

A. Establishment of programme 45

10. In 1988, in resolution 43/27 on the mid-term review of the Programme of Action, the General Assembly concluded that, in order to ensure the capacity of the Secretary-General to carry out his responsibilities with regard to the Programme of Action, the secretariats of the Steering Committee and of the Inter-Agency Task Force should be given appropriate support for the duration of the Programme, and that adequate funding, both budgetary and extrabudgetary, should be provided for this purpose. Similar conclusions were reached by CPC in 1989 8/ and by the General Assembly in 1990 in resolution 45/178. In 1990, after its discussion of programme 11, Overall issues and policies, including coordination, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, at its thirtieth session, CPC concluded that the new subprogramme 5 of programme 11 should be improved and broadened into a separate programme for African economic recovery and development. At its resumed thirtieth session, the Committee expressed general satisfaction with the substance and orientation of the new programme, Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development, which had been prepared taking into account the comments made by the Committee. The Committee felt that there should be further refinement of the programmatic content of the programme in the light of decisions that might be taken subsequently by the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies, as well as the final review and appraisal of the Programme of Action to be prepared for the forty-sixth session of the Assembly. 9/ In its resolution 45/253 on programme planning, the General Assembly adopted the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, together with the recommendations of CPC on it, and noted that one of the five overall priorities of the medium-term plan would be the economic recovery and development of Africa.

11. At its thirtieth session, CPC requested the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), to prepare a system-wide plan of action for African economic recovery and development, taking into account the development of the situation, and to submit it to the Committee at its thirty-second session in 1992. 9/

B. New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

12. In 1991, in the context of resolution 46/151 on the final review and appraisal of the Programme of Action, the General Assembly adopted the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (resolution 46/151, annex II). The major role assigned to the United Nations system in the implementation of the New Agenda involved the organizations and agencies which, in their respective areas and sectors, were to devise specific programmes for Africa that were consistent with the elements of the Agenda, and devote adequate resources for their implementation.

13. The New Agenda states that the United Nations system should contribute to ensuring efficient follow-up and monitoring of its implementation; specifically, a continuous assessment of Africa's performance in the areas outlined in the agenda was expected to have a great impact in maintaining the momentum within and outside Africa and, eventually, for renewed commitments to the agreed objectives and targets. The Agenda stresses also that the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of implementation requires the full involvement of Governments and the organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as the participation of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The General Assembly conducted a preliminary consideration of the implementation of the Agenda in 1993, and the Economic and Social Council is to devote part of its high-level segment to the same matter in 1995.

C. System-wide plan of action

14. In 1992, at its thirty-second session, CPC considered the report of the Secretary-General on the system-wide plan of action for African economic recovery and development that the Committee had requested at its thirtieth session. The Plan of Action utilizes the framework of the New Agenda and aims at providing a basis for coherent and coordinated actions by United Nations organizations and agencies, including funding programmes and the Bretton Woods institutions. 10/ In its conclusions, the Committee noted that the Plan had the structure of a compilation of activities and considered it to be a first step towards a more integrated approach. The Committee recommended that the Plan be monitored and updated by the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force for African Economic Recovery and Development. At the intergovernmental level, the Committee decided to keep the implementation of the Plan under review, considering that the follow-up and implementation of the Plan needed to be discussed with ACC at a later stage. CPC recommended that revisions be submitted for its consideration in 1994, 1996 and thereafter as might be decided by the Committee; CPC also recommended that, in view of the importance of the Plan and the unsuccessful outcome of the Programme of Action for 1986-1990, the Secretary-General should play a leading role in its implementation in his capacity as Chairman of ACC. 11/

III. PROGRAMME 45: MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

15. The medium-term plan adopted in 1990 by the General Assembly states that programme 45 complements the specific activities to be carried out by the United Nations identified in the Programme of Action [now the New Agenda] and subsequent related intergovernmental decisions as reflected in a number of programmes of the medium-term plan, in particular programme 30, Regional cooperation for development in Africa. The plan also refers to General Assembly resolution S-13/2, in particular to the fact that the General Assembly had called upon the Secretary-General to coordinate the assistance and support of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. The activities to be carried out under the programme are aimed at: 12/

(a) Ensuring that the critical problems confronting Africa will be addressed effectively and urgently in a coordinated manner by the international community, including the United Nations system;

(b) Encouraging the international community to translate its commitment to assisting Africa in achieving economic development and transformation into effective policy measures;

(c) Mobilizing increased resource flows to Africa;

(d) Increasing awareness at the global level of the critical economic situation in Africa and the actions needed to improve that situation;

(e) Supporting African countries in their efforts to enhance their own endogenous capacity with a view to achieving sustained growth and development by, inter alia, providing, at the request of individual Governments, advice on appropriate economic policy reforms.

16. Taking into account the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 47/214, the plan provides for the following: 13/

(a) In accordance with his mandate, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development (now Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) will provide overall leadership and coordination of the United Nations system activities in support of African economic recovery, development and transformation;

(b) ECA, in accordance with its role as the main economic and social development centre for the region, will exercise team leadership and responsibility for coordination and cooperation at the regional level in the implementation of this programme; ECA will further provide analytical input to intergovernmental bodies, particularly with regard to the substantive multisectoral economic and social issues, and provide recommendations with regard to possible courses of action as well as undertake operational and substantive activities in support of the programme;

(c) The Department of Public Information will continue its special programme for highlighting African economic concerns;

(d) At the national level, further efforts to improve coordination within the United Nations system should be taken in the context of the country programming framework of the United Nations and the role of the resident coordinator;

(e) The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development (now Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development), in close collaboration with the Executive Secretary of ECA, would be responsible for coordinating the preparation of the system-wide plan of action requested by CPC.

17. The medium-term plan established the following subprogramme structure:

Subprogramme 1. Mobilization of resources

Subprogramme 2. Monitoring, assessment and follow-up of the implementation of action programmes, including their financial aspects

Subprogramme 3. The campaign for global awareness of the critical economic situation in Africa

There is no priority designation among the subprogrammes. 14/

18. The General Assembly, in resolution 47/214, considered that the measures taken to enhance the implementation of the Programme of Action 1986-1990 should be strengthened to facilitate coordination and implementation of the New Agenda for the 1990s, and adopted further revisions to the plan, proposed by the Secretary-General, in particular: 15/

(a) Taking into account the experience gained in the implementation of the Programme of Action, the Secretary-General was to establish a high-level consultative group (or Panel of High-level Personalities) consisting of high-level officials from the United Nations system and well-known personalities from around the world, which was to meet about twice a year to make concrete recommendations on the implementation of the New Agenda that could serve as a basis for the Secretary-General's submissions to the high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly;

(b) The existing Inter-agency Task Force on Africa established under the previous Programme of Action and chaired by the Executive Secretary of ECA was to continue to be the framework for inter-agency consultations for the monitoring of the implementation of the New Agenda and the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development.

19. Responding to a recommendation of CPC at its thirty-first session, the Secretary-General had also established, within the Department for Economic and Social Development (now Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development), a separate and identifiable unit on Africa, headed by a Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries. This unit is the focal point for issues related to African economic recovery and development and,

in particular, the implementation of the New Agenda. It also services the High-level Consultative Group.

IV. RESOURCES

A. Resources for the coordinating and monitoring mechanisms before programme 45

20. It is difficult to draw a completely accurate picture of the resources mobilized for the coordination and central monitoring of the Programme of Action. Contributions took different forms - UNDP project funds, posts on loan, bilateral donations, in-kind contributions - did not follow the same budget cycles, and, in general, were not centrally recorded in the Secretariat. Between 1987 and 1991, on average, total funds averaged $2 million a biennium for staff and other costs. The number of staff allocated was as follows: 16/

Secretariat of the Steering Committee at Headquarters: 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 3 Professional, 3 General Service

Monitoring and appraisal of the Programme of Action at ECA: 2 Professional, 2 General Service

Global Awareness Campaign in the Department of Public Information: 3 Professional, 3 General Service

B. Resources of programme 45

1. Programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993

21. In 1992, the regular budget absorbed some of the activities and project posts that under the Programme of Action 1986-1990 were entirely funded by extrabudgetary resources. A breakdown by subprogrammes of the regular budget resources allocated to the programme follows: 17/

Subprogramme	Posts	Other objects of expenditures (Thousands of United States dollars)
Department of Economic and Social Development (now Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development)	1 D-1, 1 Professional, 1 General Service	76.0
Economic Commission for Africa	1 Professional	109.1
Department of Public Information	2 Professional, 2 General Service	400.7
		585.8

/...

In the context of the restructuring of the Secretariat in the economic and social fields, a D-2 post for the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries was provided to the programme effective July 1992, through redeployment from other areas. The total resources for posts and other objects of expenditure was $1,521,400 million.

2. Extrabudgetary resources

22. UNDP is committed to providing additional support between July 1993 and December 1995 to the three components of programme 45. The amount of expenditures, at the end of the project, is expected to reach over $1 million for 30 months, of which approximately $552,000 will be allocated to subprogramme 1, $250,000 to subprogramme 2 and $100,000 to subprogramme 3, excluding administrative overhead support costs and project evaluation. Regarding the question of sustainability beyond December 1995 when UNDP support will terminate, the UNDP project document 18/ recommends that arrangements to absorb activities into the United Nations regular budget be made. UNDP is also providing funds under country programme budgets for monitoring the implementation of the New Agenda (see para. 34 below). Other voluntary contributions are being made by Member States and United Nations organizations, mostly to support the Global Awareness Campaign through the Trust Fund for Information Support for African Economic Recovery and Development administered by the Department of Public Information. These contributions, covering part of the costs of the production and distribution of Africa Recovery and its staff not funded by the regular budget, are in decline; they were $386,000 in 1992 and $148,000 in 1993. Staff funded by extrabudgetary resources at the end of the 1992-1993 biennium were:

Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development:
1 Professional and 1 General Service

Department of Public Information: 1 Professional and 2 General Service

3. Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995

23. The programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 has increased provisions under programme 45. 19/ However, some of the additional resources under subprogramme 1 are for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries; activities of the Secretariat in support of this programme have been placed together with subprogramme 1 of programme 45 in the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries. Total resources under programme 45 itself are as follows:

Subprogramme	Posts	Other objects of expenditures (Thousands of United States dollars)
Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development)	1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 Professional, 3 General Service	167.0
Economic Commission for Africa	1 Professional	181.2
Department of Public Information	2 Professional, 2 General Service	431.5
		779.7

The total amount for posts and other objects of expenditure is $3,102,400.

24. The above resources include an additional allocation to carry out activities approved in General Assembly resolution 48/214 on the implementation of the New Agenda, broken down as follows: 20/

Programme 45	Other objects of expenditure (Thousands of United States dollars)
Meetings of the Panel of High-level Personalities	95.0
Data-gathering and analysis, support to the Inter-Agency Task Force	67.5
Study of financial systems and practices in African countries	30.0
	192.5

25. In resolution 48/228, section II, on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the General Assembly "noted the proposal regarding the New Agenda, and requested the Secretary-General to consider the creation of a new budget section relating to the New Agenda with recommendations for additional resources and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth session".

V. PROGRAMME 45: ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AND PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

A. Subprogramme 1, Mobilization of resources

1. Activities carried out in 1992-1993

26. Subprogramme 1 is the main component of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries. In accordance with its main mandate geared to mobilizing resources to assist Africa, the Office kept delegations at Headquarters informed about activities related to the New Agenda and organized meetings with representatives of donor countries. The Office was coorganizer, with the Global Coalition for Africa and the Government of Japan, of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in October 1993. The Conference, "the largest of its kind in a decade, is expected to strengthen support for Africa". 21/ The Office services the Secretary-General's Panel of High-level Personalities by preparing reports and background documents for its consideration. In resolution 48/214, paragraph 2, the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the establishment of the Panel, and requested that the Panel continue to meet regularly under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General. The Office prepared the report of the Secretary-General to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly on the mobilization of additional resources for African development: a study on overall resource flows to Africa and it commissioned and coordinated the finalization of the report on the need for and feasibility of the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities. 22/ It assisted in the finalization of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. 23/ During the period, the Office has also produced information materials, including a monthly briefing bulletin, United Nations NADAF Newsflash, giving a day-to-day account of the programme and of related activities at the United Nations and other levels; booklets on the New Agenda, main statements by the Secretary-General on African development, the records of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and the related Tokyo Declaration.

2. International support for Africa's economic recovery

27. The 1993 report on the implementation of the New Agenda recommends, in paragraph 98, the strengthening of cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and the other bodies of the system that provide technical assistance and implement projects and programmes supported by multilateral concessional official development assistance (ODA) or grants. 23/ Regarding resource mobilization for Africa, UNDP is cooperating with the joint African Development Bank (AfDB)/ECA/Organization of African Unity (OAU) secretariat; UNDP is also increasing its capacity to participate more actively in the World Bank's Consultative Group and Special Programme of Assistance (SPA) meetings. 24/ The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries had a programme for 1992-1993 for consultation with UNDP and the World Bank, with a view to promoting and enhancing round-tables and consultative group meetings, in order to make them more effective in mobilizing resources for African countries; it also had programmes to coordinate the

support provided by the United Nations to African countries, at their request, in the preparation for the round-tables and consultative groups. These activities were not implemented owing to the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat. 25/ At the end of 1993, the Panel of High-level Personalities recommended the establishment of a working group of the Panel to follow up on the Secretary-General's initiatives with the Group of Seven on African debt, with particular emphasis on debt stock reduction to ensure uniformity across reforming debtor countries.

3. Overall leadership and coordination

28. The Secretary-General has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the New Agenda and is also the Chairman of ACC, whose membership comprises the executive heads of all United Nations agencies. ACC remains the appropriate forum to ensure that the System-wide Plan of Action - the contribution of the United Nations system to the implementation of the New Agenda - is implemented and monitored. The role the existing ACC machinery can play is emphasized in the report on the System-wide Plan of Action; according to the Plan, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) (CCSQ(PROG)) and Operational activities (CCSQ(OPS)) [now the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ)] could be used as system-wide forums for developing coordinated approaches on the programmatic and operational aspects of the implementation of the Plan. 26/ In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, the ECA secretariat stated, in November 1993, that formulation by ACC of concrete recommendations on the harmonization of the programmes of the United Nations agencies, including measures on procedural requirements for enhanced decentralization, would make the New Agenda more instrumental in mobilizing the expected international support. Over the past several sessions, ACC has reviewed trends and has addressed policy issues relevant to the New Agenda under different agenda items. In the light of the outcome of the first assessment by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session of the implementation of the New Agenda, the issue of the response of the United Nations system to the challenges of economic recovery and development in Africa has been placed on the agenda of the second regular session of ACC in 1994.

29. In the context of the New Agenda, two organs have been formally established with a view to assisting the Secretary-General, namely (a) the Panel of High-level Personalities, serviced by the Office of the Special Coordinator, and (b) the Inter-Agency Task Force, the secretariat of which is located within ECA (see also para. 16 (a) above). The Panel of High-level Personalities is to make concrete recommendations on the implementation of the New Agenda (see para. 18 (a) above); in resolution 48/214, paragraph 2, of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly requested that the recommendations be made available to Member States. Regarding coordination within programme 45, the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 provides for subprogramme 1, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, to strengthen cooperation between the focal points at Headquarters and Addis Ababa for activities related to African economic recovery, development and transformation. 27/ In its report of May 1993 on UNDP support of the New Agenda, a UNDP mission noted that it could not be assured that there existed

some formal means for coordinating the activities of programme 45; but there was no doubt that the New Agenda programme would not succeed if the activities contained in the three subprogrammes were carried out in an uncoordinated manner. The July 1993 project document on UNDP support for monitoring the implementation of the New Agenda states that ECA's role as executing agency for this project demands that it coordinates activities under the project; it will establish mechanisms for mutual feedback between the project unit at Addis Ababa and those at the United Nations Secretariat in New York. This will be done in order both to avoid duplication of activities (e.g. conferences addressing the same audience) and to avoid providing conflicting or inconsistent reports. 28/

B. Subprogramme 2, Monitoring, assessment and follow-up of the implementation of action programmes, including their financial aspects

1. Activities carried out, 1992-1993

30. In 1993, the main goals of subprogramme 2 have been defined in operational terms as follows: (a) to improve the coordination aspect of monitoring the New Agenda and to move from ad hoc consultations to the adoption of a common framework of action based on mutually supportive programmes; and (b) to establish a monitoring network, closely involving Member States. In accordance with these goals, during the period 1992-1993, the subprogramme contributed to the System-wide Plan of Action and the report on the implementation of the New Agenda was prepared and submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. 23/ The function of servicing the Inter-Agency Task Force involved the preparation and servicing of three meetings of the Task Force and two meetings of its Working Group. Studies and background papers were contributed to other meetings and conferences, including meetings of the Panel of High-level Personalities, OAU/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/ECA Consultative Meeting, meetings of the Joint OAU/ECA/AfDB secretariat and sessions of the Permanent Steering Committee of OAU. It carried out two missions to subregions in relation to the establishment of a regional monitoring network for the implementation of the New Agenda. In connection with the analysis of financial flows available or required for African economic recovery and development, part of its programme of work for the biennium, the subprogramme prepared two studies, one on resource flows to Africa and the other on strategies for financial resource mobilization for Africa.

2. Coordination at the regional level

31. The secretariats of the organizations of the United Nations system and OAU met in April 1992 to review the progress achieved in the cooperation between OAU and the United Nations system. In relation to the System-wide Plan of Action, it was agreed that efforts should be made to come up with innovative activities and resources that are additional to existing ones. The meeting observed that, regarding the identification of specific activities to be carried out, action would be needed at both the institutional (namely, OAU and the United Nations system of organizations) and the intergovernmental levels. It was emphasized that the OAU secretariat should be more involved in the follow-up, evaluation

and monitoring of the implementation of the New Agenda. In this connection, it was noted that the OAU Permanent Steering Committee was working out arrangements for a machinery among African countries that would fit into the envisaged global machinery. It was suggested that OAU should be invited, when appropriate, to address such high-level inter-agency machinery as ACC. 29/ OAU is a full member of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development; and an expert of OAU participates in the work of the Panel of High-level Personalities.

32. In November 1992, the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development highlighted the need for clarifying the very concept of the System-wide Plan and, more particularly, whether it was meant to guide the actions of individual agencies towards the achievement of the New Agenda or to establish a framework for joint programming. In this regard, the meeting recognized the difficulties in associating several agencies in the implementation of joint activities. It however noted that individual approaches under way did not produce the expected impact. The meeting agreed on the following main conclusions:

(a) While the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development should aim at reinforcing harmonization and coordination of activities of the United Nations system in Africa, to achieve greater impact at all levels it should also endeavour to serve as a forum for the exchange of views on Africa's development issues as they evolved;

(b) The System-wide Plan of Action should result in more integrated activities by the United Nations system, especially in individual countries, including in the context of country programming;

(c) For individual agencies, flexibility should be introduced in order progressively to adapt their medium-term plans to the priorities of the System-wide Plan of Action.

33. Concerning upcoming revisions to the System-wide Plan of Action, the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development's Working Group suggested, in November 1992, that the revisions should focus on the impact of activities of the agencies; and that revised versions of the Plan should refer also to appropriate non-United Nations documents and especially to African regional programmes of action. The 1993 report on the implementation of the New Agenda stated in paragraph 98 that further improvement for harmonization included the reform of the performance reporting system to reflect the effectiveness and impact at the system-wide level rather than that of its individual components. 23/ As recommended by CPC, 11/ the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development is undertaking, in 1994, an updating of the plan with a view to integrating the various programmes of the United Nations system; this is done with due regard to evolving African development strategies having shared objectives with the New Agenda. In this respect, ECA and the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development undertook inter alia an analysis of the objectives of the New Agenda and of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community to harmonize the programmes and to reflect them in the sectoral protocols being prepared by the Joint OAU/ECA/AfDB secretariat.

34. A regional network for coordinating the New Agenda monitoring activities was launched in Africa by ECA in July 1993, with national focal points to be established against UNDP funding. The UNDP project document makes provision for five National Professionals and two work-months of consultancy for each of 53 African countries, to be borne by country programme budgets. 30/ In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, in November 1993, the ECA secretariat stated that

> "the initial idea was to establish within each office of the UNDP country Resident Representative a focal point which would periodically report on policies and measures adopted at the national level, and carry out sensitization and information activities. It has become apparent that the United Nations/UNDP programme strategies at the country level do not effectively integrate the prerequisites for the implementation of the New Agenda. At the subregional level, the ECA Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs), in collaboration with subregional intergovernmental organizations, are expected to handle the preparation of a progress report using the inputs of their national focal points in the line ministries of each Member State. At the regional level, the secretariat of the Task Force, supported by the substantive divisions of ECA, will compile a regional progress report which, after it is reviewed by the Task Force, will be submitted to the United Nations review organs. The advantage of such a network will be greater involvement of Member States and more effective monitoring of implementation. However, the financial resources available under the project will not enable ECA to strengthen simultaneously its central monitoring activities as originally requested in the form of one additional Professional post and one United Nations Volunteer".

C. Subprogramme 3, Campaign for global awareness

1. Activities carried out, 1992-1993

35. The May 1993 UNDP assessment mission was of the view that dissemination of information through the media will be the element that will make or break the New Agenda and that the most effective instrument for creating global awareness was the publication and appropriate distribution of the quarterly, Africa Recovery, and use of the mass media. The mission was told, at United Nations Headquarters, UNDP, ECA and OAU, that Africa Recovery was read by both donors and recipients; its briefings were impartial and to the point. Africa Recovery is produced in English (23,000 copies) and French (8,000 copies); target audiences include the media, representatives of development agencies, business leaders, NGOs, the academic community and policy makers on Africa at the multilateral and bilateral levels. It should also be noted that this quarterly has won the World Hunger Journalism Awards twice (in 1988 with The Washington Post and in 1992 with Atlantic Monthly and Newsweek). Africa Recovery is the only United Nations publication to win these awards. A readership survey of the quarterly was conducted at the end of 1993 by the Evaluation Unit of the Department of Public Information. The broad goal of this survey was to secure an accurate picture of who reads the publication, to measure the utility of the information provided and to find out how it can be improved. 31/

36. Other activities during the period 1992-1993 included the production of several briefing papers on selected issues, targeted towards a specialist audience; pamphlets have been produced for less specialized audiences; background material is prepared upon request, and a few briefings have been organized. Speaking engagements for international meetings of NGOs and parliamentary bodies, such as the April 1993 consultation with the United States congressional and administration staff on debt, have been organized. Two press kits have been prepared, and several articles have been written for the major international and African newspapers. On the basis of information published in Africa Recovery and other publications, articles describing the crises faced by the continent have appeared in The New York Times, Le Monde, The Economist and other international journals. The regular programmes of the Department of Public Information also contributed to the effort of the Africa Recovery Unit. 32/

37. A number of activities other than production of material have not been fully implemented, including seminars for senior donor-country and African journalists and coverage of African conferences. One of the goals of subprogramme 3 is to provide information support for the activities of subprogrammes 1 and 2. In this respect, subprogramme 3 was to organize and maintain regular contacts and liaison with media and other important target groups, such as parliamentarians and NGOs, in order to enlist support for actions being undertaken or that need to be undertaken; this activity was not implemented to the extent desired. 33/

38. The Department of Public Information is currently responsible for two quarterly publications, UN Chronicle and Africa Recovery. As of September 1993, UN Chronicle had four Professional and five General Service posts, and Africa Recovery two Professional and two General Service posts funded by the regular budget. In addition, one Professional and two General Service posts of Africa Recovery staff are financed from extrabudgetary contributions, which are in decline (see para. 22 above); up to July 1993, a fourth Professional post was financed from these contributions but had to be discontinued.

2. Coordination of public information activities

39. The contents of information materials, in particular newsletters and pamphlets, produced during the 1992-1993 period by the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (see para. 26 above) show a certain degree of overlapping. For the 1994-1995 period, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries has programmed several information materials that can be produced by or in close collaboration with the Department of Public Information, such as a newsletter, promotional posters and video material. 34/ UNDP, in the July 1993 project document on its support for the New Agenda, recommends strengthening the capacity of the Africa Recovery publication unit, to ensure the dedication of additional pages in every issue of this quarterly to New Agenda activities. 35/ Considering the question of who Africa Recovery ultimately answers to, UNDP recommended the establishment of an editorial board consisting of UNDP, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the Department of Public Information.

3. Need for greater publicity and consciousness-raising

40. As mentioned in paragraph 9 (b) (ii) above, the 1992 UNDP mission noted that the first order of business for the successor to the Programme of Action should be the sensitization of all end-users to the fact that a new programme, the New Agenda, did indeed exist. In November 1992, the Working Group of the Inter-Agency Task Force

> "Took note of the essential need to launch more broadly both the New Agenda and the System-wide Plan of Action in order to increase global awareness. This could be done during ACC meetings, or through each organization's established mechanism. The Working Group also suggested that, besides the actions expected from the Secretary-General, there should also be specific sensitization activities, such as workshops, seminars, booklets. The meeting also strongly felt that the sensitization process should involve the mobilization of the media for the purpose of sensitizing the international community at large and the African Member States in particular".

In the debate on the implementation of the New Agenda, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the Executive Secretary of OAU stated on 4 November 1993 36/ that greater publicity and consciousness-raising, and involvement of NGOs, was necessary to ensure that the New Agenda did not meet the fate of previous programmes. In resolution 48/214, paragraph 10, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Secretariat to raise international awareness of the urgent international and African actions needed to overcome the continent's economic crisis.

41. To a certain extent, all subprogrammes of programme 45 contribute to raising international awareness. For instance, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries is to assist the Secretary-General in coordinating the global dialogue on Africa's most pressing priorities and resource support for addressing them; in that respect, activities include organizing major conferences, keeping delegations at Headquarters informed and generating briefings for international journalists. 37/ Furthermore, the 1992 System-wide Plan of Action highlighted major activities of no less than 13 United Nations organs, agencies and bodies directed at creating global awareness of the situation in Africa. 38/

D. Implementation of the New Agenda: concerns expressed

42. In resolution 47/148, the General Assembly, while welcoming the adoption in 1991 of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, regretted that the machinery for its implementation had not yet begun operating, and emphasized the urgency of the need to adopt appropriate measures to ensure its implementation in accordance with General Assembly decisions. In May 1993, at its nineteenth meeting, the Conference of Ministers of ECA called upon the Secretary-General to strengthen, through specific measures, the role of ECA as team leader and coordinator of the United Nations system activities with

a regional perspective to ensure rational implementation of the strategic objectives for Africa's economic development within the context of the New Agenda (resolution 769 (XXVIII)). The Administrator of UNDP noted, in his 1993 report on the role of UNDP in the implementation of the New Agenda, 39/ that the agenda had so far failed to become the focal point for catalysing international and regional support for Africa's development. On 4 November 1993, during the debate on the New Agenda at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the Chairman of the Group of 77, on behalf of the countries members of that Group, stated that "full implementation of the New Agenda for Africa and adoption of the necessary measures by the international community - in particular, by the developed countries, the United Nations and the multilateral financial and development institutions - are indispensable if the agreed strategies are to be given a decisive impetus". 40/ In resolution 48/25 on cooperation between the United Nations and OAU, the General Assembly emphasized the urgency of the need to adopt appropriate measures to ensure the implementation of the New Agenda, in particular in the areas of resource flows, debt relief and diversification of African economies.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations on programme 45

43. Certain findings have been derived from the comprehensive review of programme 45 contained in the present report. The recommendations that follow are based on these findings and are aimed at strengthening the coordination function of programme 45 and enhancing the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

44. Findings related to the Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development are to be found in paragraphs 18, 26, 28 and 29 above.

Recommendation 1. Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development: The recommendations of the Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development that have system-wide implications should be presented to ACC through appropriate channels to assist it in developing coordinated approaches by the United Nations system, within the framework of the ACC machinery, to the African critical economic situation, including recovery and development.

45. Findings related to the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development are to be found in paragraphs 14, 18 (b), 28 and 31 to 33.

Recommendation 2. System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development: The first revision of the System-wide Plan of Action should focus on the impact of the programmes and projects of the United Nations system in relation to the priorities and targets of the New Agenda, with due regard to African development strategies.

Recommendation 3. Administrative Committee on Coordination machinery: The ACC machinery, and particularly CCPOQ, should ensure that concerted efforts

are made by ACC member organizations to step up implementation of the New Agenda through concrete action and policy formulation. Existing programmes of ACC member organizations and of bilateral donors at the country level should be reviewed in the context of the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development and of the System-wide Plan of Action with the view to ensuring that they reflect priority areas of the New Agenda.

46. Findings related to resource mobilization are to be found in paragraphs 8, 26, 27 and 42.

Recommendation 4. Resource mobilization: The work programme for the period 1994-1995 of subprogramme 1, "Mobilization of resources", should include specific activities dealing with Africa's debt problem in the context of the New Agenda. These activities should have the highest priority. In particular, the subprogramme should provide substantive support to the working group of the Panel of High-level Personalities on African Debt established by the Secretary-General; UNDP, ECA, the World Bank and other relevant financial institutions should be regularly consulted on common strategies to be developed. Additional expertise should be redeployed to subprogramme 1, as necessary, to carry out these activities.

47. Findings related to public information activities are to be found in paragraphs 37-41.

Recommendation 5. Coordination of public information activities: An editorial board, consisting of UNDP, UNICEF, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, the Department of Public Information and ECA, should be established to offer the necessary guidance for all public information material produced by the United Nations in the context of programme 45; the editorial board should ensure that such public information material contains adequate, objective and equitable information as required by General Assembly resolution 48/448. The editor of Africa Recovery should serve as Secretary of the board.

Recommendation 6. Need for greater publicity: Information support for the activities of subprogrammes 1 and 2 should be developed and coordinated under subprogramme 3, which should be provided with resources adequate to carry out these activities. These activities should be coordinated with related information programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system.

48. Findings related to resources for activities of programme 45 are to be found in paragraphs 9, 10, 20, 25, 38 and 42.

Recommendation 7. Resources for activities of programme 45: Bearing in mind the high priority attached to Africa in the current medium-term plan, the total financial support to programme 45 through the regular budget and extrabudgetary funding, including assistance from UNDP, should be reviewed to determine whether the expected level of resources will be adequate to

carry out the mandated activities throughout the period covered by the New Agenda.

B. Recommendations on a system-wide study

49. To the extent that any follow-up to the present report is needed, it should address the issue of the effectiveness of the system-wide response to the African critical economic situation, including recovery and development. Such a system-wide study could embrace the topics listed below:

(a) Resource mobilization: the effectiveness of activities of the United Nations system in the context of the New Agenda in mobilizing additional resources for Africa's economic recovery;

(b) Activities at national and regional levels: the effectiveness of the regional network, launched in 1993, for coordinating the New Agenda's monitoring and follow-up activities at the national level. Among the issues that could be examined are the nature and degree of participation of Governments and of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; and the feasibility of establishing within each office of the UNDP country resident representative a focal point to carry out the activities of the network;

(c) Information: the cost-effectiveness of the current system-wide activities for sensitizing/raising awareness, including promotion seminars and workshops. The possibility of relying more on non-United Nations information products could also be examined.

50. In the light of its findings regarding the effectiveness of the system-wide response to the African critical economic situation, recovery and development, the follow-up study could also review the adequacy of the structure and coordination mechanisms of programme 45.

Recommendation 8. System-wide study by the Joint Inspection Unit: Considering the scope of its mandate, which includes the capacity to evaluate work of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, it is recommended that, should CPC decide that a follow-up study on the effectiveness of the activities of the United Nations system in the context of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s is required, the study should be carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit.

C. Specialized intergovernmental review

51. Recommendation 9. Specialized intergovernmental review: The present report should be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers for review.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/47/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

2/ Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/48/16), para. 35.

3/ Ibid., Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/42/16), para. 236.

4/ E/AC.51/1992/5, para. 481.

5/ See, inter alia, A/41/683/Add.1, paras. 12, 13 and 16; DP/1991/16, paras. 9 and 10; and General Assembly resolution 43/27, annex, para. 42.

6/ A/46/280, annex.

7/ The June 1991 North-South Round-table was held at the invitation of the Canadian Government; 40 participants from 19 countries attended, about one third from Africa; international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were also represented, in most cases at the highest level, among them were AfDB, the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, OXFAM, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ECA and the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/44/16).

9/ Ibid., Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/45/16).

10/ E/1992/11, paras. 16 and 17.

11/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/47/16).

12/ Ibid., Supplement No. 6 (A/47/6/Rev.1), paras. 45.6, 45.7 and 45.9.

13/ Ibid., paras. 45.12 and 45.13.

14/ Ibid., paras. 45.16 and 45.17.

15/ Ibid., paras. 45.10.

16/ See, inter alia, DP/1990/16, para. 10 and E/AC.51/1992/5, para. 483.

17/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/46/6/Rev.1), paras. 11A.26-38; and addendum, sect. I.

18/ RAF/93/004/A/01/51, pp. 6, 7 and 20-22 and annex.

19/ A/46/6 (Sect. 8), paras. 8.128-142.

20/ A/C.5/48/64; and A/48/810.

21/ Africa Recovery, vol. 7, No. 2, October 1993, p. 1.

22/ A/48/336 and A/48/335.

23/ A/48/334.

24/ DP/1993/17, paras. 1, 24-25.

25/ A/46/6/Rev.1/Add.1, sect. III.11.A, para. 163.

26/ E/AC.51/1992/5, para. 524.

27/ A/47/6/Rev.1, para. 45.20 (g).

28/ Project RAF/93/004/A/0451, pp. 9, 11 and 12.

29/ A/47/453/Add.1, paras. 25-31.

30/ Project RAF/93/004/A/01/51, pp. 9, 13 and 20.

31/ See A/AC.198/1993/5, para. 6 (a).

32/ A/48/407, paras. 62-67.

33/ See, inter alia, A/46/6/Rev.1/Add.1, sect. III.11.A, paras. 178 (c) and 186; and A/48/407, paras. 64-65.

34/ See, inter alia, A/48/6 (Sect. 8), para. 8.132 (4).

35/ Project RAF/93/004/A/01/51, pp. 10, 19-20.

36/ A/48/PV.50.

37/ Project RAF/93/004/A/01/51, pp. 16 and 18.

38/ E/AC.51/1992/5, paras. 479-507.

39/ DP/1993/17, para. 4.

40/ A/48/PV.49.

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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-fourth session
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Item 4 (g) of the provisional agenda*

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-first session on the evaluation of the development issues and policies programme: Economic Commission for Africa

SUMMARY

At its thirty-first session the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) considered the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth evaluation of the development issues and policies programme: Economic Commission for Africa (E/AC.51/1991/3). The Committee adopted recommendations on (i) programming of activities in relation to subregional priorities; (ii) resource requirements of the MULPOCs; (iii) funding of PADIS.

In accordance with the decision taken by CPC at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations following each in-depth evaluation, the present report is a review of actions taken during the past three years which are related to the recommendations of the Committee.

Taking into account new developments, the report introduces for consideration by the Committee recommendations aimed at enhancing cost-effectiveness for the short-term operations of MULPOCs.

* E/AC.51/1994/1.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its twenty-second session, in 1982, that triennial reviews should be conducted to determine the extent to which its recommendations on in-depth evaluations had been implemented. 1/

2. The Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its thirty-first session, considered the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth evaluation of the development issues and policies programme: Economic Commission for Africa (E/AC.51/1991/3). The focus of the in-depth evaluation was on (a) the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs), (b) the Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS) and (c) the effect of extrabudgetary resources on priorities among ECA programmes.

3. At its thirty-first session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination adopted the following recommendations: 2/

(a) "The Secretary-General should identify those activities relating to economic cooperation and integration that could be reoriented and focused wholly on subregional objectives and priorities, as set out by economic subregional grouping, and ... should submit appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session;

(b) "In reviewing the resource requirements of the MULPOCs at its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly should fully reflect the recommendations of the Evaluation Report (E/AC.51/1991/3), as well as other relevant reports adopted by it. ... In the light of this review, the requisite resources should be provided to the MULPOCs for the efficient fulfilment of their mandate relating to subregional economic cooperation and integration in Africa;

(c) "The Committee further recommended that the General Assembly invite the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to provide adequate resources to support the economic integration process and to allow PADIS to become fully operational, taking into account the relevant decisions of the Governing Council."

4. The present report is a review of actions taken during the past three years which are related to those recommendations of CPC. As was the case with the past triennial reviews, the present report is based on a review of documentation, information submitted by the programme concerned and, where possible, interviews.

5. Since the in-depth evaluation has been completed, several major new developments have affected the environment in which this programme is implemented. Among these are the signing of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, on 3 June 1991 in Abuja, Nigeria; 3/ the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s; 4/ and the process of decentralization of the United Nations initiated by the Secretary-

General in 1992, which includes enhancing the contribution of the regional commission. 5/

6. The present report, taking into account the current situation, introduces for consideration by CPC a set of recommendations with a view to enhancing cost-effectiveness for the short-term operations of MULPOCs.

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MULTINATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND OPERATIONAL CENTRES

A. Legislative actions and restructuring

1. Strengthening of MULPOCs (1990-1992)

7. The ECA Conference of Ministers, in resolution 702 (XXV) of 19 May 1990, approved new terms of reference of MULPOCs which redefined the role of the Centres in clearer terms and also provided a comprehensive policy and operational framework to enable them to carry out their tasks. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1990/76 of 27 July 1990, urged the General Assembly to provide the Centres with additional resources. By the same resolution, the Council changed the lines of reporting of the Centres; they were now to report directly to the ECA Conference of Ministers through the committees of intergovernmental experts that will be responsible for supervising the activities of the Centres at the subregional level. The Secretary-General, in his subsequent report on the subject to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, 6/ noted that the programme linkages between the Centres and intergovernmental organizations, by which the programmes of the former would be derived from those of the latter and approved and supervised directly by the ECA Conference of Ministers, would represent a significant innovation in programme design, harmonization and execution. The Secretary-General proposed that 18 additional posts - 8 Professional and 10 General Service - be established in the Centres.

8. The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the subject 7/ states that the Advisory Committee intended to review the Secretary-General's proposal for additional posts for MULPOCs in the context of its review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. In that connection, the Committee requested a report which clearly indicated the specific programme of work of MULPOCs and its relationship to the programme of work of ECA. The requested report was also to provide a breakdown of the various funding sources for all the posts. Furthermore, a clear indication was to be provided on the status of MULPOCs. The ACABQ observed that, if they were an integral part of the ECA secretariat, it would seem appropriate that they should report to the ECA Conference of Ministers through the Executive Secretary of ECA rather than through the committees of intergovernmental experts. The rationale for that arrangement was to be explained in the report of the Secretary-General to ACABQ.

9. Subsequently, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of five new Professional posts in order to strengthen the capacity of MULPOCs in the promotion of subregional

economic cooperation and integration in Africa. The Secretary-General also stated that possibilities of redeployment of the remaining posts to MULPOCs (3 Professional and 10 General Service) would be explored. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/185 of 20 December 1991 on questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, accepted the Secretary-General's proposals and requested him to provide MULPOCs with the remaining posts and to report thereon at its forty-seventh session. At the forty-seventh session, the Secretary-General stated that, because of the ongoing restructuring exercise of the offices away from Headquarters, no report had been made to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session containing "final proposals regarding further strengthening of the MULPOCs through additional staff resources and modifications of the existing administrative and reporting arrangements". 8/

10. In its report on the proposed programme budget for the 1994-1995 biennium, ACABQ reiterated its request (see para. 8 above) for clarifications on the following: 9/

> "the role of the secretariat of ECA and MULPOCs in programme formulation and implementation; every effort should be made to avoid duplication of activities and to clarify further the role of the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the committees of intergovernmental experts of the MULPOCs in supervising the MULPOCs."

2. Reorganization of advisory services

11. At the ECA Conference of Ministers in May 1991, the secretariat of the Commission presented a reorganization and reorientation of its advisory services to member countries. A Multidisciplinary Regional Advisory Group (ECA-MRAG) was established under the direct supervision of the Executive Secretary. The Group was charged with strengthening the links between research and operational activities of the Economic Commission for Africa. The Group's composition varies depending on the problem being studied. The annual programme of ECA-MRAG is developed after initial consultations with Member States, intergovernmental organizations and other United Nations agencies at annual meetings of MULPOCs. That programme is further refined and expanded by continued contacts with IGOs and Governments. 10/

12. Of 39 missions implemented in 1992 by ECA-MRAG, about one third were to individual countries, about 40 per cent to the regional/subregional IGOs and about 25 per cent to international forums. For example, multidisciplinary teams were dispatched to the Eastern and Southern African Preferential Trade Area (PTA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) secretariats to (a) review their treaties in relation to the main provisions of the Abuja Treaty, and (b) assess training needs for enhancing the capacity of the secretariats of the two communities. 11/ The ECA Conference of Ministers, in resolution 756 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993, noted with appreciation the wide range of priority areas in which the Group had rendered technical advisory services to African Governments and their intergovernmental organizations since its inception, and called upon Member States to make increasing use of the available

resources and expertise of MRAG in the search for coherent and lasting solutions to their socio-economic development problems.

3. Restructuring of the substantive divisions of the Economic Commission for Africa

13. In November 1991, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa established a Task Force to review and appraise the policy orientation, programmes and management capacity of ECA. The Task Force identified in its report four desired impacts that ECA must seek to have, three of which dealt with strengthening regional and subregional cooperation. The Task Force considered that clear and concise tasks should be set for MULPOCs so that the ECA member States could judge their impact on African development at the subregional level. The Task Force stressed that, as much as possible, ECA activities should be carried out through or in cooperation with subregional or regional institutions so as to strengthen their integrating role. 12/ The ECA Conference of Ministers, in its resolution 726 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992, requested the Executive Secretary to undertake, as might become necessary, reforms in the structure of the secretariat so as to achieve full consistency with the new orientations recommended.

14. The Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its thirty-second session in October 1992, considered the revised text of programme 30 (ECA) of the medium-term plan, which incorporated the new orientations; the Committee welcomed the streamlined subprogramme structure, and noted "the vital role played by the MULPOCs of ECA in each African subregion". 13/

15. At the end of 1992, the Executive Secretary of ECA summarized new arrangements under way for the streamlining and restructuring of the Commission, as follows: 14/

(a) The restructuring of the Commission substantive divisions provided for greater concentration of activities;

(b) The signing of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community posed a new set of leadership challenges for the Commission in its programmes for regional cooperation and integration in Africa. The MULPOCs assumed critical importance in that regard playing their part as operational outreaches of the Commission, and assisting Member States and their subregional intergovernmental organizations in the identification, design and promotion of the financing and execution of integration projects;

(c) The responsibilities of the new division, entitled Trade, Economic Cooperation and Integration, of which MULPOCs were part, were defined in connection with the main goal of the Commission to assist Member States in implementing the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community; the Division was to address the production, trade, monetary and financial, and institutional aspects of regional economic cooperation and integration in a global manner. In that regard, the Division was to develop the strategies and policy instruments necessary for regional economic cooperation and integration,

and to deliver those services to Member States at the subregional level through MULPOCs.

4. Decentralization of the Secretariat in the economic and social sectors

16. In 1992, the Secretary-General initiated the reorganization of United Nations Secretariat structures in the economic and social fields. In May 1993, following consultations within the framework of the interdepartmental Task Force on Decentralization, the executive secretaries of the regional commissions "agreed that advisory services, which were included in section 12 of the programme budget, lent themselves especially well to early measures of decentralization". The conclusions are reflected in the 1994-1995 programme budget (see para. 34 below). "It was recognized that [these] conclusions constituted a set of initial measures" (E/1993/85, paras. 189-192). The steps initiated by the Secretary-General to coordinate and unify the United Nations presence at the country level "without compromising the distinctiveness of individual programmes, will be pursued in the light of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/199" [of 22 December 1992]. 15/

5. Regional economic integration

17. In May 1993, the ECA Conference of Ministers called upon Member States and the heads of ECA, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to take the necessary measures to facilitate the rationalization and integration of subregional economic institutions. The Conference stated that the promotion and strengthening of economic integration in Africa depend on the progress made first at the subregional level and subsequently at the regional level. 16/

18. Each of the MULPOCs interact with several intergovernmental organizations. 17/ The ECA Conference of Ministers, in its resolution 745 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993, requested the Centres to provide rational and effective assistance to the intergovernmental organizations in the preparation of policies for coordinating, harmonizing and rationalizing activities with a view to establishing a single community in their respective subregions. The Conference also invited African intergovernmental organizations to cooperate with MULPOCs in implementing their subregional economic integration activities and requested the intergovernmental organizations, in that regard, to communicate in good time, the areas of assistance and activity in which the backstopping of the MULPOCs is required so that they can integrate such activities in their work programmes and order of priorities. The Conference of Ministers further requested the Executive Secretary of ECA to submit to it a programme for the strengthening and rationalization of MULPOCs which takes into account all the contributing factors. The Conference renewed the appeal which it made in 1991 to the General Assembly for the financing of additional posts in MULPOCs and for the provision of additional financial resources; it also appealed to Member States to continue supporting the Centres by making contributions and by facilitating the secondment of their staff to the Centres.

B. Determinants of the programme of work of MULPOCs

1. The programming process

19. The new terms of reference of MULPOCs, approved by the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1990 (see para. 7 above), vested MULPOCs with the following responsibilities: 18/

(a) "Designing the programme of work of the Commission at the subregional level;

(b) "Implementing such a programme within the available resources;

(c) "Being first call points for any ECA assistance to the IGOs;

(d) "Channelling to ECA headquarters whose requests which cannot be dealt with by the MULPOC because it lacks the necessary expertise."

20. In November 1993, in response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, the ECA secretariat stated the following:

> MULPOCs work in close collaboration with the IGOs existing in their area with a view to identifying a set of subregional priorities to be addressed. The programme of work of the MULPOCs takes into account not only their own delivery capacity, but also the expertise available in ECA substantive divisions and from the ECA-MRAG [see paras. 11 and 12 above]. For the 1992-1993 biennium, an attempt was made to integrate fully the programme of work of MULPOCs and that of ECA substantive divisions. This aim was not totally achieved because some activities were initiated by substantive divisions in response to requests made by member States and the IGOs prior to the adoption of the new mandate of MULPOCs. But a great deal of duplication was avoided and, for the 1994-1995 biennium, all efforts will be made to make MULPOCs solely responsible for programming the activities of ECA at the subregional level. This would require a new approach to the programming of the whole ECA secretariat.

21. The following two examples illustrate difficulties encountered currently by MULPOCs in programming and implementing their activities:

Example 1. One subregion has approximately 40 IGOs. In order to coordinate their activities, IGOs have created an Association, of which 10 main IGOs are members. They have requested the MULPOC to serve as the Association's secretariat. At the 1993 meeting of the committee of experts of the Association, difficulties encountered in the periodic updating of the directory of IGOs of the subregion were discussed; specifically the failure of some IGOs to forward the required information, and the lack of resources to enable MULPOC to conduct a sufficient number of missions. The Liaison Bulletin of IGOs was issued for the first time in 1993. Among other objectives, it is intended for use by IGOs in the identification of areas of inter-IGO cooperation and in the execution of their work programmes. 19/

Example 2. Another MULPOC serves only two IGOs and is located at the same duty station as the main IGO. In 1993, during consultations between that MULPOC and the main IGO, several impediments to the implementation of common projects were identified, including the following:

(a) Almost no involvement of the IGO during the project identification studies;

(b) Low involvement of member States, in particular of national experts at the IGO, in the feasibility studies carried out by MULPOCs;

(c) Identification studies that do not clearly follow priorities of either member States or IGO, such as those programmed by ECA headquarters in the context of the subregional activities of the Commission's substantive divisions. 20/

2. Linking national and subregional levels

22. The General Assembly, in resolution 48/25 of 29 November 1993 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, called upon United Nations agencies to make an effort "to ensure harmonization of their programmes with those of the African regional and subregional economic organizations".

> "The complexities involved in harmonizing and integrating individual country objectives with regional and subregional strategies has become more apparent with the inception of African strategies aimed at the socio-economic integration of the continent. At the same time structural and operational shortcomings of the regional commissions to respond adequately and appropriately to regional development requirements have also become more acute." 21/

23. In accordance with their 1990 terms of reference, MULPOCs are to develop "effective working relationships with the Governments, the IGOs, the UNDP offices and other international organizations with a view to harmonizing technical assistance programmes at the subregional level". 22/ In November 1993, in response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, ECA observed that:

> So far, no operational framework has been developed to integrate the regional dimension into national programming. As a consequence, ECA, including the MULPOCs, has remained largely dissociated from the whole process of follow-up to General Assembly resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and 47/199 of 22 December 1992 on operational activities for development.

Those two resolutions "reaffirm that the recipient Governments have the sole responsibility for the coordination of external assistance and the principal responsibility for its design and management". The UNDP fifth intercountry programme, which was prepared in collaboration with African Governments, IGOs and United Nations agencies, was discussed and endorsed by the third

extraordinary meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers in November 1991 before its approval by the Governing Council of UNDP in May 1992.

24. Findings and recommendations set forth in the 1990 evaluation report of UNDP assistance to African intergovernmental organizations 23/ have been the basis for the formulation of the fifth UNDP intercountry programme (1992-1996). 24/ The UNDP evaluation mission observed in its report 23/ that, during the fourth programming cycle (1987-1991):

> "The respective roles of UNDP, ECA, and the specialized agencies in project formulation, implementation and monitoring were never clearly articulated. ... Some IGOs were overloaded with separate and often conflicting project proposals from specialized agencies." [The UNDP mission recommended that] "attempts should be made at the national level to link national projects to regional projects for reasons of economy and impact. This can be achieved by a more active involvement of the Resident Representatives and the outposted UNDP Regional Project officers". ... "In the present circumstances, African Governments would be well-advised to synchronize the rhythm of regional UNDP assistance with national planning or structural adjustment programmes in individual countries as far as possible. ... The relevant ministries in each country can handle this coordination exercise with the IGO concerned."
>
> In that respect, "one of the main purposes of the advisory services of ECA-MRAG in the field of economic cooperation and integration is to assist African States in creating departments of regional cooperation that would seek to establish their credibility as a source of sound thinking to development issues and to demonstrate their ability to help formulate a common approach for their respective subregions." 25/

ECA has implemented three subregional multisectoral projects of assistance to economic groupings in close coordination with other United Nations agencies; follow-up actions aimed at the implementation of programmes will be necessary.

3. Rationalization of intergovernmental organizations

25. The evaluation mission on UNDP assistance to African IGOs (see para. 24 above) found that:

> "Almost all the IGOs in Africa suffer from certain inherent institutional and administrative weaknesses which undermine the confidence and credibility they should be accorded at the national and international levels. Some of the problems stem from the proliferation of subregional economic groupings and the lack of effective coordination of their activities."

There are currently more than 200 African organizations involved in regional cooperation.

> "The proliferation of economic integration organs has often led inevitably to overlapping membership, duplication of activities, not to mention

> conflicting regulations and decisions. ... [Most] African countries are ... members of two or more groupings. Sixteen countries belong to three or more groupings." 26/

The OAU and IGOs, as well as member States, have strongly underlined the need to harmonize and coordinate subregional and regional development activities within the framework of a rationalization programme. 27/

26. In the African region, during the UNDP fourth programming cycle, 1987-1991, the main beneficiaries of regional and subregional integration projects funded by UNDP were the eight major integration IGOs. With ECA and OAU, UNDP is reviewing its regional programming in order to rationalize current initiatives and ensure greater responsiveness to changing conditions and priorities. By the end of the fifth UNDP programming cycle, 1992-1996, it is expected that there will be a significant reduction in the number of IGOs, a better harmonization of their activities and a higher degree of intra-African cooperation in the key integrative sectors identified. 28/ In May 1993, at the Fifth Consultative Meeting of the Chief Executives of OAU, ECA and AfDB, the Executive Secretary of ECA stressed that "the building of the Pan-African Economic Community will initially have to be done by strengthening subregional economic communities" (see also para. 17 above). After the 1993 OAU Cairo Summit, the OAU/ECA/AfDB joint secretariat was revived with a closer collaboration from the UNDP/Regional Bureau for Africa. At the end of 1993, the joint secretariat agreed that a coherent programme of work for the African Economic Community (AEC) must be designed as soon as the Abuja Treaty enters into force. The existing regional economic communities (RECs) constitute the foundation upon which the AEC is to be built, as specified in the Abuja Treaty; the joint secretariat observed that the RECs are at various levels of development, and that its assistance to them will differ from one REC to another. In connection with the above, the OAU secretariat, ECA and the UNDP Regional Liaison Office in Addis Ababa are preparing a joint programme to be considered for funding by UNDP. 29/

27. At ECA the responsibilities of the new division, entitled Trade, Economic Cooperation and Integration, of which MULPOCs are part, are defined in connection with the main goal of the Commission to assist member States in implementing the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (see para. 15 above). In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, the ECA secretariat stated, in November 1993, that a comprehensive analysis of the requests for assistance from IGOs to ECA has never been undertaken. In relation to the rationalization and harmonization of the 30 ECA-sponsored institutions which have support functions for regional integration and development, the Commission will submit a report with recommendations to the 1994 session of the ECA Conference of Ministers.

4. Monitoring of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

28. In the context of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, UNDP funded a project for the monitoring and appraisal of the Programme, with ECA as executing agency. The evaluation of that project, conducted in 1992, concluded that, 30/

"Even with 'informal support' ... from other ECA departments, the United Nations system and inter-agency task forces, [the project] is clearly ... understaffed", with only two professionals and two secretaries. "Monitoring policy developments, economic trends and the [Programme of Action] implementation experiences in 51 countries is a mammoth task requiring a more complex structure and a greater number of personnel than [available]."

29. The successor to the Programme of Action, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of African in the 1990s, was adopted in 1991. 31/ The UNDP project document on support for monitoring the implementation of the New Agenda states that "ECA has ... an established framework for coordinating the New Agenda monitoring activities through the MULPOCs and their associated national focal points". 32/ In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, the ECA secretariat stated, in November 1993, that:

At the subregional level, the MULPOCs, in collaboration with subregional IGOs, will be expected to handle the preparation of the progress report on the achievements of various subregions using the inputs of national focal points. At the level of the ECA, the secretariat of the Inter-Agency Task Force monitoring the implementation of the New Agenda, supported by the substantive divisions, will handle the compilation of a regional progress report.

C. Resources available to MULPOCs

1. Level of staffing

30. A comparison of staffing levels between January 1990 and January 1993 shows an increase of regular budget posts and a decrease of extrabudgetary posts. Taking all sources of funds into account, there were 28 Professional and 35 General Service staff assigned to MULPOCs in 1990, and there were 28 Professional staff - including two project staff outposted from Addis Ababa - and 38 General Service staff assigned to MULPOCs in 1993. 33/ The decrease in extrabudgetary posts has been significant, from eight Professionals in 1990 to none in 1993, and from 14 supporting staff in 1990 to 2 in 1993.

(a) It should be noted that:

(i) Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/185 C of 20 December 1991 five new Professional posts were established for the biennium 1992-1993 to strengthen the MULPOCs; those posts remained vacant owing to the treatment of vacancy procedures and the recruitment freeze;

(ii) Twenty Professional posts were encumbered in 1993, five of which were Administrative/Finance Officer (L-2/3) posts. Consequently, there was an average of only three Professional posts in substantive areas for each MULPOC;

(iii) Eleven General Service posts encumbered by MULPOC staff were on loan from other units of the Commission; 15 General Service posts were financed from temporary assistance funds;

(iv) There has been a strengthening of the MULPOCs through a movement of P-5 and P-4 posts to the field, and a corresponding movement of P-3 and P-2/1 posts to Addis Ababa headquarters;

(b) Member States have always stated their readiness to provide technical support to MULPOCs through the secondment of their civil servants on a short-term basis (see para. 18 above); but on only two occasions has that cooperation materialized. This could not be repeated because MULPOCs lack extrabudgetary resources to meet the cost of travel of staff seconded by their Governments.

2. Expertise of MULPOC staff

31. The review team, appointed in 1989 to review the functioning of the MULPOCs, had recommended that provision should be made for at least one Professional or L-level expert to cover each of the priorities established by Member States. 34/ This was to create a minimum "core staff" with the requisite expertise. The review team's assessment was that 42 Professionals or L-level expert staff were required in 18 different fields of expertise for the five MULPOCs.

32. In its 1992 report on MULPOCs, ECA observed that the "evaluation of MULPOC resource requirements remains valid". 35/ The report describes the areas of specialization of the staff on board, and the specializations assigned to vacant newly established posts. Up to 1991 the expertise available in MULPOCs had been mostly that of general economists, who were in charge of most sectors. By 1992, however, approximately half of the areas of specialization identified by the 1990 review team had been filled.

33. The report of the Board of Auditors for the 1990-1991 biennium states that "the programme outputs of MULPOCs were insufficient in respect of quantity as well as quality". 36/ The auditors stated that reports by MULPOCs were often elaborations of facts and data already available to the member States of the subregion concerned. In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, in November 1993, the ECA secretariat acknowledged that:

> The outputs of MULPOCs used to be of a general nature and stated that action had, however, been taken to make them more action-oriented and that their operational character had been enhanced owing to the increasing diversification of technical expertise becoming available in the MULPOCs.

34. Another method of providing MULPOCs with specialists is through the temporary assignment of Regional Advisers who have the appropriate specialization to the MULPOC in need of that specialization. In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, the ECA secretariat stated, in November 1993, that:

It is actively considering decentralizing the work of MRAG to the MULPOCs; also, following the decentralization exercise at United Nations Headquarters, the 12 new posts of Regional Advisers in different disciplines would enable MRAG to respond more effectively to the different priority programmes of the five MULPOCs. The modalities of coordination in the secretariat of ECA, with the coordinator of ECA-MRAG and the division supervising the MULPOCs would have to be worked out.

35. Further decentralization of specialists could occur by their reassignment from the ECA substantive divisions to MULPOCs. In the 1992 ECA report on MULPOCs, 37/ it was proposed that:

"The ECA substantive divisions will transfer to the MULPOCs the programming of their activities at the subregional level; ... [the divisions] will participate in the programming exercise and ... in the substantive supervision of the work of the MULPOCs. [In restructuring the ECA secretariat,] efforts will be made to physically relocate staff members of the substantive divisions to the MULPOC headquarters".

3. Non-staff resources of MULPOCs

36. The 1990 review team on MULPOCs reported that "the resources made available to the MULPOCs, both human and financial, have been grossly inadequate, [and that it constituted] the single most important obstacle in the fulfilment of the mandate". 38/

37. Based on estimates made by the review team on what would constitute an adequate level of non-staff resources for MULPOCs, ECA estimated that the amount of resources required for 1992-1993 would have been $3,741,200. 39/ The regular budget for 1992-1993 provided an amount of $1,173,700. For the biennium 1994-1995, appropriations in the amount of $1,338,100 have been approved for the five MULPOC offices. Those appropriations do not include provisions for established posts, consultants and experts and travel costs.

38. In 1992, extrabudgetary resources - mostly earmarked contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD) - were $79,818 for the five MULPOCs.

4. Resources for projects

39. In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, in November 1993, the ECA secretariat stated that:

UNDP stopped its financial support to MULPOCs in January 1983, arguing that the latter are not intergovernmental bodies distinct from the ECA secretariat. However, MULPOCs are still involved in the implementation of UNDP-funded projects of IGOs executed by ECA.

40. The 1990 evaluation report on the assistance of UNDP to African IGOs stated that: 40/

"The resources allocated to the subregional and regional integration institutions during the Fourth Programme Cycle were far from adequate as regards the requests submitted by the IGOs and were also thinly spread throughout the various subregions for any appreciable impact"; [it estimated that] "a resource level of $70 million should be the IPF for the Fifth Cycle in favour of the integration IGOs".

In the 1992 report on MULPOCs, 41/ ECA stated that UNDP was not expecting a new inflow of resources to support the projects of IGOs before 1995, at the earliest, and that, in the meantime, alternative sources of extrabudgetary funds would be actively sought.

41. The UNDP Assistant Administrator stated at the 1993 ECA Conference of Ministers that, 42/ since 1987, the UNDP/Regional Bureau for Africa had approved a total of $54.2 million towards projects in support of regional integration; the ECA executed 15.4 per cent - $8.3 million - of the programmes of the subregional IGOs. Referring to the UNDP intercountry programme for Africa, she announced that, for the rest of the Fifth Cycle (1992-1996), the total programme resources for regional programmes amounted to only $10 million. For the future, she stressed that intercountry programme resources would depend on well-established criteria, such as the specific development impact of the programme and the commitment of the participating countries, as demonstrated by their willingness to co-finance from national indicative planning figures and government sources.

42. Under their 1990 terms of reference, MULPOCs provide Member States and IGOs with short-term advisory services in development planning and assist in the translation of those plans into multinational and multisectoral programmes and projects, including the identification and formulation of programmes and projects for execution by them or, at their request, by the MULPOC itself. In a 1993 report, 43/ one MULPOC observed that, of the three main stages prior to the execution of a project - that is (i) project identification, (ii) preliminary studies, and (iii) feasibility study - typically only the first stage can be fully covered by the regular budget. For the second and third stages, the MULPOC relies on extrabudgetary resources, either UNTFAD or UNDP. Finally, the report states that, owing to insufficient resources in the regular budget, studies for project identification cannot always be as thorough as desirable to convince donors approached by ECA. 44/

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATION ON THE PAN-AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

A. UNDP assessment in 1992

43. Established by resolutions 359 (XIV) and 366 (XIV) of 27 March 1979 adopted by the Conference of Ministers of ECA, the Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS) has been operating at ECA since 1980, with the overall objective of promoting development information management in the Africa region, and funded from extrabudgetary sources. From 1980 to 1992 the major donor to PADIS was UNDP. In 1992, UNDP conducted a final evaluation report of the PADIS project 45/ for the Fourth Programme Cycle, 1987-1991. The observations and

findings of the evaluation mission pertinent to the main objectives and activities of the project are summarized below.

(a) Substantial and measurable progress was made towards achievement of PADIS immediate objectives in the fourth year of the project:

(i) Inputs are now coming in regularly from nearly 20 national participating centres, as well as from one subregional and several institutional participating centres; the only aspect of the immediate objective which has encountered problems is the establishment and strengthening of subregional centres (para. 34.I);

(ii) There is a constant growth in the quantity and variety of information available through the project. Major efforts have been made to improve the quality of materials entered in the databases. The project has taken advantage of innovations in information technology to increase the availability of its information resource base;

(iii) PADIS has taken the lead in the region with the introduction and promotion of the use of compatible norms and standards by participating centres; some universities and institutions of higher learning in Africa have incorporated PADIS methodologies in their curricula (para. 34.IV);

(b) The project has made significant progress towards the attainment of its development objective. At the time of the evaluation, 38 (of 50) African countries had named their national participating centres in the PADIS network, as compared to 9 countries at the start of the project, and 43 institutional centres were in the network. Within those centres, the project is directed at government planners and decision makers, and researchers. The identified beneficiaries were being assisted to develop their information management capabilities through the provision of advisory services, training programmes and a variety of tools, methods and standards (paras. 36-39);

(c) The need for and usefulness of the activities carried out under this project were recognized by the African Member States. However:

(i) Given the resource base of the project, the immediate objectives were found to be over-ambitious in terms of geographical coverage, span of attention and scope of activities (para. 43);

(ii) The persistent difficulties in knowing the actual and potential users and their respective needs, as well as the wide variety of requests for training and advisory services which emanated from the member States, led to a loosely defined design of the project in those respects (para. 44);

(iii) Given the workload as defined in the project document and additional functions within ECA, the project was understaffed. That situation was aggravated by the high turnover of staff and the slow recruitment procedures of the executing agency (para. 46);

(iv) The level of development and sophistication of the national centres differs widely. The same holds true for the degree of support by national Governments and the importance they attach to information-related issues (para. 49).

UNDP support to PADIS for the North African subregion was provided under a different project; 46/ the project final evaluation, conducted also in 1992, drew similar conclusions regarding the achievement of objectives.

B. Work programme preparation

44. On a regular basis PADIS conducts studies of user needs (1988, 1990 and 1992) and presents the results to intergovernmental bodies, which consider them and make recommendations for the forthcoming work programme. Following the UNDP Evaluation of 1990, PADIS prepared a major study in 1991 on information systems in Africa; 47/ the study was sent to all Member States for comment and presented to the Regional Technical committee of PADIS. After analysis of the comments made by the various sources, PADIS concluded that:

> "Emphasis in the cycle 1992-1996 will be on networking, both in the substantive as well as the technological sense, and in the diversification of information products; that present areas of activity will be continued, with particular attention to improvement of the marketing of PADIS and of its training programme."

The project document for the funding of PADIS by the European Community for the period 1992-1996, indicates that PADIS will make special efforts to reach the private sector. 48/

45. At the 1993 meeting of its Regional Technical Committee, PADIS was congratulated by the participants for its substantial accomplishments during the period since the last meeting despite major resource limitations. In the general debate, the meeting suggested that users pay for information services. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) urged further that: 49/

> "ECA work closely together with OAU and UNDP on an integrated approach to developing information systems and requested UNDP to involve ECA/PADIS in its global Sustainable Development Network (SDN). PADIS was also [urged] to do more in the area of publishing training materials, using desktop publishing techniques and operating on cost recovery principles."

C. Resources available to information systems development and PADIS

46. The activities of ECA in information systems development began in 1980 with extrabudgetary projects. They have been part of the medium-term plan for the Economic Commission for Africa since the 1984-1989 plan (as revised in 1984), and have been included in the programme budget for ECA since 1986, although resources have never been provided from the regular budget. The 1992-1993 programme budget for ECA contains activities on information systems development in subprogramme 1, but without any provision of regular budget resources.

Through March 1992, PADIS staff were funded from extrabudgetary sources, including UNDP (six Professional staff, six General Services staff) and IDRC (one staff member). In March 1992, the UNDP staffing came to an end. Since then, on a month-to-month basis, PADIS staff have been covered from several sources of grants and funds. 50/

47. The ECA Conference of Ministers, in resolution 732 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992, requested UNDP to consider the funding of the activities of PADIS under its Fifth Regional Programming Cycle for Africa (1992-1996) commensurate with its expansion of operational activities. The Conference of Ministers also requested the Executive Secretary to intensify his efforts to fund core posts for PADIS from the regular budget. Since 1987, the ECA Conference of Ministers had passed four resolutions requesting the Executive Secretary to make efforts to have the information systems development funded from the regular budget of the United Nations - 600 (XXII) of 24 April 1987, 658 (XXIV) of 7 April 1989, 679 (XXV) of May 1990 and 716 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991. In 1992 the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1992/51 of 31 July 1992 entitled Strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa to face Africa's development challenges in the 1990s, in which, among other things, the Council requested the Executive Secretary to "ensure that [the Commission's] activities are fully grounded in sound data and information systems, through the strengthening of the Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS), which should be provided with adequate financial resources". For UNDP intercountry programme resources, see paragraph 41 above. The Conference of Ministers in resolution 766 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993 noted "with concern the decreasing availability of extrabudgetary resources for implementation and utilization of development information systems and technology"; it further noted "the precarious financial situation of PADIS and the need to end its reliance on extrabudgetary sources of funding". The Conference of Ministers urged Member States to give priority to information systems development in the use of their UNDP country IPFs and, among other measures, requested the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, to ensure the provision of four Professional and two local-level posts, as well as resources to permit the delivery of activities with its 1994-1995 programme budget.

48. In 1993, the Economic and Social Council, by resolution 1993/67 of 30 July 1993, requested "the General Assembly to ensure ... adequate staffing and resources to permit the delivery of activities to the subprogramme of the Commission on information systems development, beginning with the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995". By decision 48/453, the General Assembly endorsed Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/67. Regarding the programme budget implications of this decision, the Secretary-General stated that the overall resources under sections 15 and 20 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 would be adequate to carry out the activities programmed for the next biennium; that it is also expected that the internal organizational restructuring of ECA would lead to further strengthening of the subprogramme information systems development; and that a review of future arrangements for PADIS would be undertaken in the course of 1994 and would be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers for its consideration. 51/

49. In response to queries by the Central Evaluation Unit, in November 1993, the ECA secretariat stated that:

> The Executive Secretary of ECA intends to make information systems development part of the regular programme of ECA. The required core posts will be provided for from the regular budget, while extrabudgetary funds will be sought for activities and projects.

At the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Technical Committee for PADIS in April 1993, 52/

> "On the topic of cost recovery, the secretariat reported that some users were already paying for advisory services and training, and that others were attempting to find ways to use UNDP national IPFs to finance information projects which would require technical assistance from regional sources ... UNDP expressed its willingness to assist ECA in locating other donors".

Recently, three new grants have been received, one from the International Development Research Centre in Abidjan (IDRC), one from the Government of the Netherlands and one from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The last two are new donors to the programme. Projects are pending with the European Community and the Governments of Italy and Japan, as well as with the Islamic and African Development Banks.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Multinational Programming and Operational Centres

50. Programmes of MULPOCs: CPC recommended that the Secretary-General should identify those activities relating to economic cooperation and integration that could be reoriented and focused wholly on subregional objectives and priorities, as set out by economic subregional groupings, and should submit appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. ECA, through restructuring of its substantive divisions and the adoption of new terms of reference of the MULPOCs, has established the conditions under which the CPC recommendation could be realized (see paras. 15, 19 above). However:

(a) It should be noted that the current efforts to rationalize the activities of numerous subregional economic groupings, in most cases, have not borne fruit yet; not all groupings are in a position to set out clear objectives and priorities for their subregion (see paras. 21, 25-26 above).

(b) Currently, MULPOCs find it difficult to complete all the studies required for project formulation because of lack of regular budget resources. Also, a number of projects are not executed owing to the sharp decrease of extrabudgetary funding of regional programmes. UNDP is not expecting a new inflow of resources to support those projects before 1995, at the earliest (see paras. 40-42 above).

(c) Focusing on priorities set out by economic subregional groupings does not necessarily mean that dedicated subregional ECA institutions, such as MULPOCs, are the only structure to implement a programme of work derived from those priorities. Since 1991, the ECA-MRAG, a central advisory group under the

direct supervision of the Executive Secretary, has played a much appreciated role in support of subregional intergovernmental organizations (IGOs); such a group offers the flexibility required to answer a wide range of needs (see paras. 11-12, 24, 34 above).

(d) Some aspects of subregional cooperation urgently require better coordination and monitoring, namely (i) to harmonize and coordinate subregional and regional development activities; (ii) to integrate individual country objectives with regional and subregional strategies; (iii) to monitor more closely the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (see paras. 17, 22-24, 28-29 above).

51. Resources of MULPOCs: CPC further recommended that, in reviewing the resource requirements of MULPOCs at its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly should fully reflect the recommendations of the evaluation report (E/AC.51/1991/3), as well as other relevant reports adopted by it and, in the light of that review, the requisite resources should be provided to the MULPOCs for the efficient fulfilment of their mandate relating to subregional economic cooperation and integration in Africa. In agreement with that recommendation, the General Assembly supported the efforts of ECA to strengthen MULPOCs. Those efforts were thwarted to some extent by the decrease in recent years of extrabudgetary resources, and by the scarcity of staff in areas of critical importance to MULPOCs. Measured against the level of resources mentioned in the in-depth evaluation report and other relevant reports, no meaningful increase of resources has been achieved (see paras. 7, 9, 30-32 above). In particular the level of non-staff resources is considered to be inadequate and is thus causing implementation difficulties (see paras. 21, 30 (ii), 36-38, 42 above). ECA is actively considering the decentralization of regional advisers to MULPOCs, as well as the relocation of staff of substantive divisions to them (see paras. 34-35 above).

52. It is recommended that:

Recommendation 1, MULPOCs: Priorities of each Centre

In the short term, each MULPOC should focus its activities on the rationalization of subregional groupings and their programmes, with due attention to country objectives, as well as regional strategies, taking into account the first phase of the implementation of the Abuja Treaty. Participation in the regional network set up by ECA for monitoring the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s should be the second highest priority.

Recommendation 2, Overall priorities in ECA for subregional activities

In time of budgetary restraint, and pending the rationalization of subregional programmes, resources available should be mobilized only to support projects of the highest integration impact; and, of those projects, those which are most likely to be granted all the funds required for their implementation. ECA should continue to rely on temporary outposting of headquarters staff to a subregion, and on the activities of ECA-MRAG rather

than attempt to provide all MULPOCs at the same time with the critical mass of resources required.

Recommendation 3, MULPOCs: Redeployment within the ECA 1994-1995 budget

The allocation of resources to the MULPOCs for the biennium 1994-1995 should be revised in the course of the biennium, and existing resources at ECA redeployed to match requirements, with due attention to non-staff resources.

B. Pan-African Development Information System

53. Resources of PADIS: CPC had recommended that UNDP should provide adequate resources to allow PADIS to become fully operational. UNDP support of PADIS came to an end in 1992 (see para. 46 above). The ECA Conference of Ministers is concerned by the precarious financial situation of PADIS and, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1993/67, requested the General Assembly to ensure the provision of adequate staffing and resources for ECA's information systems development, beginning with the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 (see paras. 47-48 above). PADIS has made significant progress towards achievement of its objectives (see para. 43 above), and ECA is trying to diversify the PADIS donor base, as well as to increase cost recovery revenues (see para. 49 above). A review for future arrangements for PADIS will be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers at its session in May 1994. Should it be necessary, the Secretary-General would revert to this question following the outcome of the review.

C. Specialized intergovernmental review

54. Recommendation 4, Specialized intergovernmental review

The present report should be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers for review and action as appropriate.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/37/38), para. 362.

2/ Ibid., Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/46/16), paras. 432-439.

3/ A/46/651, annex.

4/ General Assembly resolution 48/214, annex.

5/ A/C.5/47/88, paras. 58-63.

6/ A/C.5/45/57, paras. 19, 21 and 22.

7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/45/7), paras. 49-50.

8/ A/C.5/47/53, para. 28.

9/ A/48/7, para. V.11.

10/ E/ECA/CM.18/19, paras. 1, 4, 5 and 8; Preliminary Evaluation of ECA's Multidisciplinary Regional Advisory Group (ECA-MRAG) (ECA/PPCO/EV/003, December 1992), para. 7.

11/ Ibid., paras. 12 and 21.

12/ E/ECA/CM.18/4, Introduction and sects. I.B, II.D.1 and III.B.2.

13/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/47/16) (Part II)), para. 168.

14/ Memorandum of the Executive Secretary of ECA dated 29 October 1992, pp. 1 and 2; with attached Proposed New Organizational Structure, ECA, 26 October 1992, pp. 1, 2 and 12.

15/ A/C.5/47/88, para. 63.

16/ E/ECA/CM.19/27, and resolutions 743 (XXVIII), para. 6, and 745 (XXVIII), preamble, of 4 May 1993.

17/ "Report of the Review Team on the Structure, Organization and Operations of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres of the Economic Commission for Africa" (E/ECA/CM.16/13), paras. 30-35.

18/ Report on ECA MULPOCs, draft report prepared by ECA for the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly (5 November 1992), para. 9.

19/ Report of the sixth meeting of the Association of West African IGOs (ECA/MULPOC/NIA/IGOs/92/19, March 1993), paras. 2, 34, 37, 38 and 43.

20/ Réunion de concertation BDEGL-SEP/CEPGL-MULPOC, ECA/GSY/MULPOC (July 1993), sects. 3, (i) and (ii).

21/ ECA, Preliminary Evaluation of ECA-MRAG, op. cit., para. 23.

22/ ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 702 (XXV), of 19 May 1990, annex, para. 8 (e).

23/ UNDP, "Report of an Evaluation of UNDP's Assistance to African Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs)", (September 29-21 November 1990), paras. 57, 104, 105; and, in para. 25 of the text above, paras. 80 and 121.

24/ UNDP, "Regional Economic Integration, Annual Report of the Administrator for 1992" (DP/1993/14), paras. 4-9.

25/ ECA, "Preliminary Evaluation of ECA-MRAG" (1992), op. cit., para. 11.

26/ UNCTAD, Regional Integration Issues in Africa (TD/B/39(2)/11), para. 85.

27/ "Report of an Evaluation of UNDP's Assistance to African Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs)", op. cit., para. 121.

28/ DP/1993/14., op. cit., paras. 3, 11, 14 and 15; "The role of UNDP in the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s" (DP/1993/17), para. 17.

29/ Report of the consultative meeting, held in December 1993 (OAU/ECA/AfDB Joint Secretariat), paras. 10 and 13.

30/ UNDP evaluation of project RAF/88/127 (November 1992), para. 33.

31/ General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, annex.

32/ UNDP project document RAF/93/004/A/01/51 (July 1993), p. 13.

33/ A/C.5/45/57, para. 14; ECA staffing table. Memorandum of the Executive Secretary of ECA (29 October 1992), op. cit.

34/ E/ECA/CM.16/13, op. cit., pp. 37-38, table 3.

35/ Report on ECA MULPOCs (1992), para. 11 and annex IV.

36/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 5 (A/47/5), vol. I and Corr.1, para. 140 (c).

37/ Report on ECA MULPOCs, op. cit., para. 10.

38/ E/ECA/CM.16/13, op. cit., para. 101 and table 2.

39/ Ibid., para. 98; Report on ECA MULPOCs, op. cit., table IV and annex IV.

40/ "Evaluation of UNDP's assistance to African IGOs", op. cit., executive summary (para. 5) and para. 137.

41/ Report on ECA MULPOCs, op. cit., para. 14.

42/ E/ECA/CM.19/27, paras. 151-153.

43/ Réunion de concertation, op. cit., pp. 1 and 2.

44/ Ibid., p. 13.

45/ PADIS, Phase III, UNDP project RAF/86/053, Terminal Report (June 1992).

46/ RAB/88/012.

47/ Adaptation of PADIS to Changing Needs (ECA/PADIS, RTC/7, October 1991), paras. 5, 8 and 12.

48/ ECA, "Projet de document en vue d'un financement par la CEE, 1992-1996", paras. 61-63.

49/ ECA/PADIS/RTC/93/7, 23 April 1993, para. 8.

50/ ECA Briefing note on PADIS, op. cit.

51/ A/C.5/48/53, paras. 4 and 5.

52/ ECA/PADIS/RTC/93/7, op. cit., paras. 9 and 11.